

From: Roy Seneca/R3/USEPA/US
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To: "white.terri-a@epa.gov" <white.terri-a@epa.gov>; "kulik.michael@epa.gov" <kulik.michael@epa.gov>; "schafer.joan@epa.gov" <schafer.joan@epa.gov>; Shawn Garvin; Daniel Ryan; Kathy Hodgkiss; Ron Borsellino; Dennis Carney; Betsaida Alcantara; Helen Duteau; Trish Taylor; Jennie Saxe; Stacie Driscoll; Cecil Rodrigues; Heather Gray; Humane Zia; Michael DAndrea; William Early

CC:
Subject: WNEP-TV - Cabot Blasts EPA's Decision on Dimock Water (Video)

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Cabot Blasts EPA's Decision on Dimock Water
By Renie Workman

4:38 p.m. EST, January 25, 2012

The controversy in Susquehanna County is the on-going dispute over wells residents said are contaminated from natural gas drilling.

Wednesday Cabot Oil and Gas released a scathing statement in response to last week's decision by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to test 60 wells in the Dimock area and to have water delivered to some homes in Dimock.

All this comes after the state allowed Cabot to stop water deliveries.

Now Cabot is firing back at the EPA.

Cabot is speaking out for the first time since Friday when residents along Carter Road in the Dimock area got a welcome delivery of fresh water.

Last week the federal EPA announced it would temporarily deliver water to several homes in the area as well as test 60 wells to check for water contamination.

Residents claim their water was contaminated by natural gas drilling.

Cabot Oil and Gas had been delivering water until November when the state department of environmental protection declared the water safe and said Cabot no longer had to provide water to residents.

Now Cabot is responding to the EPA's decision to step in, saying in a statement:

"While taking water samples is certainly something EPA does from time to time, Cabot is concerned that this recent action may be more of an attempt to advance a political agenda hostile to shale gas development rather than a principled effort to address environmental concerns in the area."

The Dimock area has been at the forefront of the national debate on natural gas drilling and fracking.

Celebrities have even voiced their support for residents, but Cabot said it has three main concerns with the EPA's decision.

One, the EPA has not presented credible evidence to show new sampling is a wise use of resources after more than 2,000 wells in the area have already been tested and analyzed.

Two, EPA's concerns are inconsistent with state regulators who have determined that Dimock drinking water is safe.

And three, that the EPA's decision is a change in position unsupported by new facts. Cabot claims as recently as December the agency told Dimock residents their water did not pose a health concern.

Cabot also claims that the EPA knows nearly half of all Pennsylvania's water wells do not meet standards and are worse than those in Dimock but that the agency has not done anything to deal with those issues.

Newswatch 16 did try to contact the EPA for comment on Cabot's position but has not yet received a response.

Roy Seneca
EPA Region 3 Press Officer
Office of Public Affairs
seneca.roy@epa.gov
(215) 814-5567